(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any time-frame has been set to take such experiments to operational capability; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. Development of precision farming techniques and practices for increasing agricultural productivity is one of the priority research areas of ICAR.

(b) to (d) The ICAR institutes and State Agricultural Universities are conducting on-station and on-farm experiments on precision techniques such as laser land leveling, site specific nutrient management, precision seed application systems, precision irrigation systems and leaf colour charts etc. to enhance productivity through efficient management of inputs. Under on-farm experiments, yield advantage of 5 to 10% and irrigation water saving to the tune of 25 to 30% has been achieved with laser land leveling. A Mission Mode project on precision farming was sanctioned under NATP programme with lead centre at Project Directorate on Croping Systems Research, Modipuram, Meerut to develop precision management strategies for rice-wheat systems. Such research is from a long perspective and therefore of a continuous nature in different forms.

Reforms in agriculture sector of Orissa

1858. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have committed to bring a complete reform in the agriculture sector of Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the National Horticulture Project that is proposed to be launched in the State; and

(d) the other measures Government propose to evolve to help the beleaguered paddy farmers of the State from the clutches of the middlemen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and would be placed on the Table of the House.

Mustard oilseeds production

†1859. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the rabi crop, production of mustard oilseeds has been estimated to be more in comparison to the last year;

(b) if so, the estimated total production of this year and to what extent it is more than that of the last year;

(c) whether it is also a fact that NAFED has decided to purchase mustard containing eight per cent moisture at minimum support price;

(d) if so, whether due to irregularity of rains the moisture in the mustard produced in rabi is upto 9 to 10 per cent; and

(e) if so, the provisions made to purchase the mustard containing such an excessive moisture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) As per the second advance estimates for 2004-05, the production of rapeseed/mustard is estimated at 75.89 lakh tonnes which is 17.57 lakh tonnes or 30.13% more than the estimated production in 2003-04.

(c) NAFED is the nodal agency of Government of India for procurement of oilseeds and pulses under Price Support Scheme. Under the scheme, NAFED's mandate is to procure mustardseed confirming to Fair Average Quality (FAQ) specifications stipulated by Government of India. As per FAQ norms, maximum tolerance limit of moisture content is 8% for mustardseed within which procurement is made.

(d) and e) The moisture content in the initial arrival of mustardseed in mandies generally remains higher at the level of 14-18% which comes down to the FAQ level of 8% as the day temperature increases. Accordingly,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.